

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

The following is a complete listing of all claims in the subject patent application, with the status of each claim being indicated in a parenthetical expression. Claims 1 and 10 being currently amended are presented with markings showing the changes made relative to the immediate prior version. Claims 2-9 and 11-16 not being amended herewith are presented in clean version. Claims 17-26 are being cancelled.

1. (Currently Amended) An angled tissue cutting instrument comprising
an elongate angled outer tubular member comprising a distal end, a proximal end, a bend between said distal end and said proximal end, and an opening at said distal end defining a cutting port; and
an elongate flexible inner tubular member rotatably disposed in said outer tubular member and comprising a distal end, a proximal end, an elongate tubular body between said distal end of said inner tubular member and said proximal end of said inner tubular member, a cutting configuration at said distal end of said inner tubular member for exposure by said cutting port to cut anatomical tissue when said inner tubular member is rotated within said outer tubular member, a flexible region along said body disposed in said bend ~~to transmit torque to said cutting configuration when said inner tubular member is rotated in forward and reverse rotational directions,~~ said flexible region comprising a continuous helical cut formed along a length portion of said body ~~corresponding to said bend,~~ a coating of adhesive disposed over an outer surface of said body along said length portion, and a heat shrunk sleeve disposed over said length portion with a close diametric fit, with said adhesive bonding said sleeve to said outer surface of said body along said length portion, said flexible region conforming to said

bend while transmitting torque to rotate said cutting configuration when said proximal end of said inner tubular member is rotated in forward and reverse rotational directions, said sleeve bonded to said body providing resistance to wind-up and unwinding of said length portion when transmitting torque.

2. (Original) The angled tissue cutting instrument recited in claim 1 wherein said helical cut is formed through the wall thickness of said body at a helix angle in a first direction about a central longitudinal axis of said flexible inner tubular member.

3. (Original) The angled tissue cutting instrument recited in claim 2 wherein said helix angle is about 20° and said first direction is a left hand direction about said central longitudinal axis of said inner tubular member.

4. (Original) The angled tissue cutting instrument recited in claim 2 wherein said helical cut is formed in a stepped pattern comprising repeating interconnected steps.

5. (Original) The angled tissue cutting instrument recited in claim 4 wherein each step repeats at rotational intervals of about 120° about said central longitudinal axis of said inner tubular member.

6. (Original) The angled tissue cutting instrument recited in claim 4 wherein each of said steps comprises a transverse cut segment extending transverse to the

length of said body at said helix angle to a plane perpendicular to said central longitudinal axis of said inner tubular member and a longitudinal cut segment extending from said transverse cut segment along the length of said body.

7. (Original) The angled tissue cutting instrument recited in claim 1 wherein said adhesive comprises a spray adhesive.

8. (Original) The angled tissue cutting instrument recited in claim 1 wherein said sleeve is made of fluorinated ethylene propylene.

9. (Original) The angled tissue cutting instrument recited in claim 8 wherein said sleeve has a thickness of about .010 inch and a shrink ratio of about 1.3 to 1.

10. (Currently Amended) An angled tissue cutting instrument comprising
an elongate angled outer tubular member comprising a distal end, a proximal end, a bend between said distal end and said proximal end, and an opening in said distal end defining a cutting port; and

an elongate flexible inner tubular member rotatably disposed in said outer tubular member and comprising a distal end, a proximal end, an elongate tubular body between said distal end and said proximal end of said inner tubular member, a cutting configuration at said distal end of said inner tubular member for exposure by said cutting port to cut anatomical tissue when said inner tubular member is rotated within said outer tubular member, and a flexible region along said body disposed within said

bend, said flexible region comprising an outer wall along an outer diameter surface of said inner tubular member and an inner wall along an inner diameter surface of said inner tubular member, said outer wall being secured to said inner wall, said inner wall comprising a helically cut length portion of said body having a cut through the ^{inner} wall thickness of said body extending helically along said length portion, said outer wall comprising a continuous solid flexible surface covering said helically cut length portion, said flexible region conforming to said bend while transmitting torque to rotate said cutting configuration when said proximal end of said inner tubular member is rotated in forward and reverse rotational directions, said outer wall secured to said inner wall providing resistance to wind-up and unwinding of said helically cut length portion.

11. (Original) The angled tissue cutting instrument recited in claim 10 wherein said flexible surface is adhesively secured to an outer surface of said body.

12. (Original) The angled tissue cutting instrument recited in claim 10 wherein said flexible surface comprises a heat shrunk sleeve receiving said helically cut length portion therein.

13. (Original) The angled tissue cutting instrument recited in claim 10 wherein said cut is formed through said ^{inner} wall thickness of said body in a stepped pattern.

14. (Original) The angled tissue cutting instrument recited in claim 10 wherein said outer tubular member has a lumen receiving said inner tubular member and further comprising an aspiration port in said distal end of said inner tubular member and an aspiration passage through said body in communication with said aspiration port, wherein said flexible surface prevents communication between said aspiration passage and said lumen along said flexible region.

15. (Original) The angled tissue cutting instrument recited in claim 10 wherein said outer tubular member has a lumen in communication with said cutting port, said inner tubular member is received in said lumen, said lumen defines an irrigation channel for receiving irrigating fluid between said outer tubular member and said inner tubular member for discharge through said cutting port, said body has a lumen, wherein said flexible surface prevents communication between said lumen of said body and said irrigation channel along said flexible region.

16. (Original) The angled tissue cutting instrument recited in claim 10 wherein said outer tubular member includes a plurality of said bends and said inner tubular member includes a plurality of said flexible regions disposed within said bends, respectively.

17.-26. (Cancelled)